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NPIC/IEG (10/83)

18 OCTOBER 1983

**SOVIET TANK PROGRAM CHANGING
CHELYABINSK TRACTOR AND APC PLANT, USSR (SWN)**

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1. **SIGNIFICANCE:** THE CONFIRMATION OF CHELYABINSK TRACTOR AND APC PLANT AS A TANK PRODUCER, THE VERY RECENT IDENTIFICATION OF PROBABLE M1983/1 TANK PRODUCTION AT OMSK, AND THE NOTICEABLE REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF T-72 TANKS SEEN AT NIZHNIY TAGIL IS EVIDENCE THAT MAJOR CHANGES AND/OR INCREASES IN SOVIET TANK PROGRAMS MAY BE UNDERWAY. (SWN)

2. **REMARKS:** FOUR PROBABLE T-72 MEDIUM TANKS WERE ON FLATCARS AT CHELYABINSK TRACTOR AND APC PLANT _____ AWAITING SHIPMENT. THE CANVAS-COVERED TANKS WERE IN WOODEN SHIPPING FRAMEWORKS IN THE NEW FABRICATION AREA OF THE PLANT. EARLIER EVIDENCE OF TANK PRODUCTION AT CHELYABINSK INCLUDED THE PRESENCE _____ TANK CHASSIS AND T-72 - SHAPED TANK TURRETS AT THE PLANT SINCE AUGUST 1982 AND MARCH 1983, RESPECTIVELY; THE NEARLY COMPLETED UPGRADE OF THE ASSOCIATED TEST AREA SINCE OCTOBER 1981; AND THE IDENTIFICATION OF A T-72 TANK AT THIS TEST AREA IN JULY 1983. TANK TURRETS, SIZED AND SHAPED LIKE T-72 TURRETS, HAVE BEEN PRODUCED AT THE ADJACENT CHELYABINSK STEEL AND MACHINE TOOL PLANT ORDZ _____ FOR MANY YEARS. CRATED GUN TUBES WERE ALSO FIRST IDENTIFIED HERE IN MARCH 1983. (SWN)

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ANALYST'S COMMENTS -- IT HAD BEEN ASSESSED THAT ANY TANK CHASSIS AND TANK TURRETS PRODUCED AT THE TWO CHELYABINSK PLANTS WERE SHIPPED ELSEWHERE FOR FINAL ASSEMBLY. THE PRESENCE OF COMPLETED TANKS AT CHELYABINSK _____ SUGGESTS FINAL TANK ASSEMBLY IS PERFORMED HERE. UNTIL NOW, THE PLANT HAD BEEN ASSESSED TO PRODUCE ONLY CIVILIAN TRACTORS AND BMP ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS, ALTHOUGH, NO BMP HAVE BEEN SEEN AT THE PLANT FOR SEVERAL YEARS. THE PLANT PRODUCED TANKS DURING WORLD WAR II AND CONTINUED TO PRODUCE TANKS UNTIL ABOUT 1960. TANKS REPORTEDLY PRODUCED AT CHELYABINSK INCLUDED THE JS SERIES OF TANKS, THE T-34 AND THE T-54. (SWN)

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[] TANK CHASSIS AT THE PLANT COULD BE T-72, T-80, OR M1983/1 CHASSIS. HOWEVER, THE TURRETS APPEAR TO HAVE THE SHAPE OF A T-64, T-72 OR M1983/1. THE INCREASED ARMOR PROTECTION, A UNIQUE SIGNATURE TO THE T-80, IS NOT EVIDENT ON THE TURRETS SEEN AT EITHER OF THE TWO CHELYABINSK PLANTS. THE IMAGERY INTERPRETABILITY IS SUCH THAT THIS FEATURE SHOULD BE OBVIOUS. SINCE A T-64 TURRET WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE PUT ON A T-72 - BASED CHASSIS AND SINCE NO TURRETS FOR THE T-80 WERE PRESENT, THE TANK PRODUCTION IS ALMOST CERTAINLY FOR A T-72 SERIES OR THE M1983/1. BECAUSE THE OMSK TANK PLANT VOROSHILOV 174 [] IS THE PROBABLE PRODUCER OF THE M1983/1 TANK AND IT WOULD BE ATYPICAL FOR A NEW TANK SUCH AS THE M1983/1 TO BE PRODUCED IN TWO LOCATIONS, T-72 SERIES TANKS ARE PROBABLY BEING PRODUCED AT CHELYABINSK. (TSR)

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A COLLATERAL SOURCE HAS STATED THAT T-72 ENGINES ARE PRODUCED AT CHELYABINSK. THE ALMOST COMPLETED VEHICLE ACCELERATION TEST TRACK AT THE CHELYABINSK ARMORED VEHICLE TEST AREA

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[] COULD BE USED TO EVALUATE THE TANKS PRODUCED AT THE PLANT. THE T-72 AT THE TEST AREA DURING JULY 1983 MAY HAVE BEEN EVIDENCE OF THE FACTORY AND/OR MILITARY ACCEPTANCE TESTING OF T-72 PRODUCED AND IS CONSISTENT WITH THAT SEEN AT THE TEST AREAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE THREE OTHER SOVIET TANK PLANTS. []

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IT CAN NOT BE DETERMINED WHAT EFFECT T-72 PRODUCTION (IF CONFIRMED) AT CHELYABINSK WOULD HAVE ON T-72 PRODUCTION AT NIZHNIY TAGIL TANK/RR CAR MFG PLT 183 [] THE T-72 SERIES HAS BEEN IN PRODUCTION HERE SINCE 1973. CURRENTLY NIZHNIY TAGIL IS ASSESSED TO PRODUCE THE T-72 SERIES TANKS AS WELL AS THE T-80. IF T-72 PRODUCTION WERE TO OCCUR SOLELY OR PRIMARILY AT CHELYABINSK, NIZHNIY TAGIL COULD CONCENTRATE ON FULL SERIES PRODUCTION OF THE T-80. SINCE AUGUST 1983, A SIGNIFICANT DECLINE IN THE NUMBER OF MEDIUM TANKS SEEN AT THE SHIPPING YARD OF THE PLANT HAS BEEN OBSERVED. THIS DECLINE COULD RESULT FROM PHASING OUT OF T-72 PRODUCTION. (SWN) []

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3. [] COORDINATES 55-09-15N 061-28-17E (S)

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4. COLLATERAL REFERENCES: CIA, IR FIRM NO 7011741, PLANT SUMMARY (S)

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